CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 22 July 1969, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Alhaji SULE KOLO (Nigeria)

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PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:	Mr. S.A. FRAZAO
	Mr. P. CABRAL de MELLO
	Mr. L.F. PALMEIRA LAMPREIA
Bulgaria:	Mr. K. CHRISTOV
	Mr. M. KARASSIMEONOV
	Mr. I. PEINIRDJIEV
Burma:	U CHIT MYAING
	U KYAW MIN
Canada:	Mr. G. IGNATIEFF
	Mr. R.W. CLARK
	Mr. J.R. MORDEN
Czechoslovakia:	Mr. T. LAHODA
	Mr. J. STRUCKA
	Mr. J. CINGROS
Ethiopia:	Mr. A. ZELLEKE
India:	Mr. M.A. HUSAIN
	Mr. K.P. JAIN
Italy:	Mr. R. CARACCIOLO
	Mr. F. LUCIOLI OTTIERI
	Mr. R. BORSARELLI
	Mr. U. PESTALOZZA
Japan:	Mr. K. ISAKA
	Mr. Y. NAKAYAMA
	Mr. T. SENGOKU
	Mr. J. SAKAMOTO
Mexico:	Mr. J. CASTANEDA
	Miss E. AGUIRRE
	Mr. R. VALERO

[redacted]

Mongolia:	Mr. M. DUGERSUREN
	Mr. J. BANZAR
	Mr. Z. ERENDOO
Nigeria:	Alhaji SULE KOLO
	Mr. C.O. HOLLIST
	Mr. L.A. MALIKI
Poland:	Mr. A. CZARKOWSKI
	Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI
	Mr. H. STEPOSZ
	Mr. R. WLAZLO
Romania:	Mr. N. ECOBESCO
	Mr. O. IONESCO
	Mr. C. GEORGESCO
	Mr. A. SASU
Sweden:	Mrs. A. MYRDAL
	Mr. A. EDELSTAM
	Mr. S. ERICSON
	Mr. R. BOMAN
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:	Mr. A.A. ROSHCHIN
	Mr. R.M. TIMERBAEV
	Mr. V.V. SHOUSTOV
	Mr. V.B. TOULINOV
United Arab Republic:	Mr. H. KHALLAF
	Mr. O. SIRRY
	Mr. E.S. El REEDY
United Kingdom:	Mr. I.F. PORTER
	Mr. W.N. HILLIER-FRY
	Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE

United States of America:	Mr. J.F. LEONARD
	Mr. A.F. NEIDLE
	Mr. W. GIVAN
	Mr. R. McCORMACK
Special Representative of the Secretary-General:	Mr. D. PROTITCH
Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General:	Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (Nigeria): I declare open the 421st plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

2. I am sure the Committee would wish that, before calling upon the first speaker, I should on behalf of all of us here, convey our congratulations to the Government of the United States of America on its epoch-making achievement of sending man to the moon. It is indeed a tribute to human intelligence and technology; and we hope that these instruments of advancement will be directed more and more towards the benefit of humanity as a whole. May I ask the representative of the United States of America to convey the congratulations of this Committee to the United States Government?

3. Mr. LEONARD (United States of America): At the last meeting of this Committee the Chairman of the day very graciously expressed the hope of all that this great enterprise of the flight to the moon would be successful; and today again, as those brave men are on their way back to what we hope will be a safe landing on earth, you, Mr. Chairman, have also made most generous and moving remarks on this topic. Many members of the Committee have in recent days also spoken in the same spirit on informal occasions to me and to many other members of the United States delegation; and on behalf of the United States Government and the American people I should like to express the deep appreciation which we all feel for those very friendly and thoughtful gestures.

4. As one of the many Americans who have lost a good deal of sleep very cheerfully in the last few days, I am naturally very touched that this is a feat of American science and technology which is being acclaimed throughout the world. At the same time I feel that this exploit is above all an achievement of the whole human race, one which transcends national rivalries just as it transcends the science and technology which made it possible. The spirit of generosity and fellowship with which the news has been received around the world is, I believe, a testimony to that; and it seems to me one of the most heartening aspects of this whole tremendously inspiring accomplishment. A shared human experience of this noble character is something for which we can all be profoundly grateful.

5. May I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the very kind thoughts which you have expressed and which I shall gladly transmit to my Government.

6. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland): I should like to join you, Mr. Chairman, in extending also our congratulations to the United States delegation on the successful landing of the Apollo 11 mission on the moon. This is indeed an achievement of historic

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

dimensions, like that of sending the first artificial satellite into outer space and the first man, Yuri Gagarin, into orbit around our globe. We extend our wishes for a safe return to all three of the brave cosmonauts.

7. The Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has resumed its work with the participation of two new members -- the People's Republic of Mongolia and Japan. I should like, on behalf of the Polish delegation, to take this opportunity to welcome the representatives of those two States and to express our deep conviction that they will make a valuable contribution to the solution of the tasks facing our Committee.

8. Having fulfilled my pleasant duty, I should like to refer to some of those tasks in greater detail. The top priority among them goes, of course, to measures designed to halt the nuclear arms race and to reduce and eliminate the existing nuclear arsenals. Undeniable progress has already been made in this respect, progress which is borne out by the 1963 Moscow partial test-ban Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1), the 1967 Convention concerning the peaceful utilization of outer space (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI), Annex), and, last but not least, the 1968 Treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (ENDC/226*).

9. The current international situation and the present state of the nuclear arms race make it imperative, however, to make urgent efforts to bring into force the most recent of these agreements -- the non-proliferation Treaty. The very significance of the Treaty argues for its early implementation. While ending all possibilities of proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Treaty provides further prospects for nuclear disarmament and for the development of fruitful international co-operation in the field of peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. Viewing the Treaty in this light, the Polish Government was among the first to sign it. After the due legislative process my country ratified the Treaty earlier this year, on 3 May.

10. For the Treaty to enter into force effectively it is necessary that it be adhered to or ratified by the largest possible number of States, particularly those known for their advanced technological potential in the field of nuclear energy. Needless to say, the absence of signatures of such States, or prolonged delay in the ratification of the Treaty, cannot but seriously disturb the rhythm of disarmament negotiations, generate a political climate far from favourable to disarmament efforts and, in the last instance, be exploited to undermine the confidence in our Committee which, as we all know very well, was instrumental in arriving at the agreed text of the Treaty.

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

11. In this connexion the Polish delegation would like to draw the Committee's attention to the position adopted by the Government of the German Federal Republic, which continues to withhold its signature from the Treaty and justifies its attitude with time-worn arguments or ever new circumstances. Evidently such an attitude cannot create a climate favourable either to general and complete disarmement or to regional disarmament in Europe, or to the establishment of security in this area, a problem in which my country is vitally interested.

12. May I be permitted now to refer to the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and to present the views of my delegation concerning the report of the Secretary-General of 1 July (A/7575).

13. I should like to reiterate to the Secretary-General, to his collaborators and to the fourteen consultant experts the appreciation of the Polish delegation for the preparation of this highly informative and comprehensive report. Poland, like many other States, attaches great importance to measures designed to ensure strict and universal observance of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (ibid., p.117) and to putting an end to the arms race in the field of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. A year ago almost to the day, on 30 July 1968, the Polish delegation proposed to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament that the Secretary-General be requested to prepare, with the assistance of consultant experts, a report on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use (ENDC/PV.385*, para.70). This proposal was endorsed by the Committee and included in its report to the General Assembly (ENDC/236, page 4).

14. Acting on the recommendation of the Committee, the General Assembly at its last session adopted resolution 2454 A (XXIII) (ENDC/237), which was jointly sponsored by Canada, Poland and a number of other members and which called on the Secretary-General to prepare such a report with the assistance of qualified consultant experts. On the basis of this resolution the consultant experts, among them a Polish expert, prepared a unanimous report in accordance with their mandate and the agreed terms of reference, a report which the Secretary-General found it possible to endorse in its entirety.

15. The key factor by which my delegation was guided in its initiative concerning chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons is the earnest desire of the Polish diplomacy -- a desire that stems from the basic premises of Poland's foreign policy and

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

her historic experiences -- to put an end to war, to put an end to the use in war of barbarous weapons and methods of warfare, to achieve general and complete disarmament. May I add at this juncture that the tragic experiences of my nation during the Second World War are still alive in the minds of the Polish people, and justifiably so. As a result of Nazi genocide -- when the invader had no hesitation in resorting to the use of poisonous chemical agents to exterminate inmates of the death camps -- millions of Poles perished.

16. The Polish delegation is convinced that the report on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use -- just like the earlier report on the possible effects of the use of nuclear weapons (A/6858) -- will not only alert world public opinion to the dangers inherent in these weapons and their possible use but will also provide, in the words of resolution 2454 A (XXIII)

> "... a valuable contribution to the consideration by the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament of the problems connected with chemical and bacteriological weapons".

We welcome the report and the Secretary-General's Foreward to it as a valuable contribution to the work of this Committee. While discussing the effects of the possible use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, the report at the same time confirms the urgent necessity of ensuring that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 is universally observed. Moreover, the report also argues eloquently for the total elimination of those weapons of mass destruction.

17. The Polish delegation finds that the report and its conclusions coincide on many points with the views which originally motivated it in first submitting the proposal for the preparation of such a report. First, the report emphasizes the importance of the Geneva Protocol; second, it classifies jointly chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons as weapons of mass destruction exercising their effects not only on military targets and personnel but also and to an even greater extent on civilians; third, the report makes clear the harmful effects on man of incapacitating gases, which it terms non-humanitarian methods of warfare; fourth, it stresses that once any chemical or bacteriological (biological) weapons had been used in warfare there would be a serious risk of escalation of the conflict into a nuclear one; and fifth, the report makes it plain that prospects for peace throughout the world -

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

"... would brighten significantly if the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents intended for purposes of war were to end and if they were eliminated from all military arsenals."
(A/7575, para. 376)

18. In the light of such an assessment of the report of the Secretary-General my delegation wishes to submit a working paper (ENDC/256) which seeks to underline the significance of the report for the strengthening of the effectiveness of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and for the further consideration of ways and means of reducing and eliminating those weapons by the prohibition of their development, production and stockpiling.

19. We recognize with satisfaction the existence at this table of a consensus on the necessity of undertaking further steps in the field of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. For this reason the Polish delegation wishes to suggest that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should lay particular emphasis in its report to the General Assembly on the significance of the report on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons as a suitable basis for the further work of this Committee in regard to these types of weapons. We wish to propose furthermore that the Committee's report should include a recommendation that the Secretary-General's report be considered in the light of the appeal contained in U Thant's Foreword, in which he urged the Members of the United Nations -

"1. To renew the appeal to all States to accede to the Geneva Protocol of 1925;

"2. To make a clear affirmation that the prohibition contained in the Geneva Protocol applies to the use in war of all chemical, bacteriological and biological agents (including tear gas and other harassing agents), which now exist or which may be developed in the future;

"3. To call upon all countries to reach agreement to halt the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents for purposes of war and to achieve their effective elimination from the arsenal of weapons." (A/7575, p. xii)

20. Moreover, the Polish delegation considers that in its further work this Committee should take into account the following principal criteria.

21. First, the main objective in the field of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons should be to ensure strict and universal observance of the existing international

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

juridical norms prohibiting their use as contained in the Geneva Protocol of 1925. The significance of the Protocol is brought into focus when the report goes on to state that it helped to establish "a custom and hence a standard of international law" and that -

"... the existence of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 may have helped as a deterrent to the use of chemical or bacteriological (biological) weapons in World War II..." (ibid., para. 7)

In the light of the significance of the Geneva Protocol it becomes indispensable that States not parties to the Protocol should accede to it and should refrain from any action in the military, political or legal sphere which could undermine the effectiveness of the prohibitions contained in the Protocol.

22. Second, any further steps with regard to those weapons should reflect the need for joint consideration of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. There are many arguments to support such an approach. Because of the effects of their use both chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons are classified as weapons of mass destruction which, again in the language of the report, "stand in a class of their own as armaments which exercise their effects solely on living matter." (ibid., para. 371) "Living matter" here means in the first place human beings, and animals and plants. Furthermore, no distinct dividing line can be drawn between those two types of weapons; for, as the report puts it -

"All biological processes depend upon chemical or physico-chemical reactions, and what may be regarded today as a biological agent could, tomorrow, as knowledge advances, be treated as chemical." (ibid., para. 19)

Moreover, the many similarities in the nature of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons permit their integration into one system of mass annihilation.

23. It would not be entirely irrelevant to recall in this connexion that in all the currently-binding international agreements -- such as the Geneva Protocol of 1925, the peace treaties and the settlements concluded after the First and Second World Wars -- as well as in the respective drafts of a treaty on general and complete disarmament submitted in this Committee by the Soviet Union (ENDC/2/Rev.1) and the United States (ENDC/30 and Add. 1-3), chemical and bacteriological weapons as weapons of mass destruction have been dealt with jointly.

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

24. We are deeply convinced also that the Committee would disappoint the expectations of world public opinion if it failed to devote due attention to the problems of chemical weapons, whose continued development creates ever new threats to mankind. World public opinion demands equally firmly the elimination of the threat of chemical warfare and other barbarous methods of waging war. I should like to express the hope that the proposals submitted by the Polish delegation in its working paper will meet with the understanding and support of the members of the Committee.

25. My delegation has devoted careful attention to the proposals and suggestions submitted to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament with regard to further measures in the field of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, including the draft convention tabled by the United Kingdom delegation on 10 July (ENDC/255). While reserving the right to make more detailed comments on the subject at a later stage of disarmament negotiations, I wish to assure the Committee of the readiness of the Polish delegation to consider any concrete measure which would take due account of the criteria presented above. This co-operation will be forthcoming also within the scope of efforts to extend agreed prohibitions to both bacteriological (biological) and chemical weapons. Our readiness to co-operate in this regard is in line with our general will to co-operate with other States in this Committee, in the United Nations and in other international organizations with a view to ensuring observance of the prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and securing their elimination from military arsenals.

26. In concluding my remarks I should like to join the other representatives who, in addressing this Committee, have expressed hope for the achievement at the current session of tangible progress in solving some of the problems facing the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. We are fully aware of the magnitude of those problems. Indeed, apart from the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, they include the important question of prevention of the utilization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for military purposes and the entire and complex issue of nuclear disarmament. Here I should like to recall that, as in the past, the Polish delegation is in favour of early progress on an underground nuclear test ban as well as limitation, reduction and complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

27. I hope that I shall be expressing the sentiments not of my delegation alone in saying that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament at its current brief session must not spare any effort to prepare further, agreed recommendations which would pave the way realistically to future negotiations and stimulate the disarmament deliberations both at this table and at the forthcoming General Assembly session. This earnest desire not only corresponds to the Committee's mandate but also reflects the sense of responsibility before the international community for the future course of disarmament negotiations.

28. Mr. LEONARD (United States of America): Before starting my formal statement I should like just to thank all of those who, since my arrival here, have been kind enough to express words of welcome to me. I will make every effort to repay with contributions to the work of the Committee.

29. Following the resumption of this Committee's work on 3 July, we have had informal discussions with many delegations on the problems and prospects for agreement on a sea-bed arms-control measure. In the course of these very frank and valuable discussions we have been asked about our reasoning regarding certain provisions of our draft treaty (ENDC/249) and how we think this treaty might operate. We think it may be of general interest if we now report to the Committee on the substance of these informal exchanges.

30. Throughout our discussions two threads have been apparent. Other delegations have asked us, first, "Is it really desirable to conclude an agreement with a prohibition as limited as the one proposed by the United States? Should we not attempt to achieve restrictions covering more than weapons of mass destruction? If we limit ourselves to a treaty which prohibits only emplacement of weapons of mass destruction, will we be passing up an opportunity, perhaps for ever, to achieve a more comprehensive arms control measure?" This is the first thread that has been apparent in many of the comments put to us.

31. The second thread concerns the significance of a limited measure for the non-nuclear Powers, large and small, the Powers that have no present capability nor any intention ever to place weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed. Not only is there concern about the significance for them of a measure confined to weapons of mass destruction, but there is question as to the role of these Powers in making a sea-bed treaty work that is to say, in carrying out its verification.

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

32. We recognize that these concerns are genuine and pertinent. They demonstrate that the members of this Committee are pursuing their responsibilities with the utmost seriousness. The members of this Committee would not be doing their job if they did not examine thoroughly whether they are formulating the maximum practical measure. Nor should we fail to examine what role all of us can and should play in carrying out an international arms control measure. We are grateful, therefore, that so many delegations have talked to us candidly about these issues. It is in that same spirit that we wish to review these two broad questions in an effort to explain to the entire Committee our views on these crucial points.

33. Our decision to submit to this Committee a treaty which bans the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction but does not refer to other military uses of the sea-bed results mainly from three factors: our desire to prevent the use of the sea-bed for those weapons which would threaten the security of States; our desire to make significant progress in controlling the arms race, whenever this may be possible; and finally, the need to ensure that the prohibitions are in balance with our verification capabilities.

34. It should be clear to everyone here that the United States believes that arms control measures will be sound, that they will contribute to international security, when each party can be confident that any restraint it accepts is being adhered to by the other parties. Unfortunately, the task of first locating and then of clearly identifying the nature and purpose of all of the wide range of activities that are being and can be carried out on the ocean floor is staggering. These problems were gone into in some detail by Ambassador Fisher in May, (ENDC/PV.411) so I shall not cover the same ground now.

35. We have been asked whether, despite our acknowledged inability to verify fully a ban on a wide variety of military activities, we should not still include some prohibitions that may not, as a practical matter, be subject to verification. This suggestion implies that some prohibitions beyond the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction are so urgently needed or are of such significance that they should be accepted even without verification. It is our belief, however, that realistic possibilities do not now and will not soon exist for conventional military uses of the sea-bed that would be threatening to the territories of States. Nor do we believe that there are non-nuclear military uses of the sea-bed that could in the next few years trigger an arms race.

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

36. It has none the less been asked: what would be the harm in establishing such a prohibition? There are several answers to this question. First, some non-nuclear but very clearly military uses of the sea-bed are strictly defensive, are presently essential to our security and that of others and therefore must not be subject to treaty prohibitions. I refer, for example, to devices for the detection and surveillance of submarines. Secondly, we believe that we should not now attempt to formulate a broad, and unverifiable, prohibition because we really do not know what it would mean in practice. The problem of defining additional prohibited activities beyond the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction seems to us very complex; and we are reluctant to establish any prohibition if we cannot visualize what its practical impact might be, or if we cannot be sure that all other parties share our understanding of the prohibition.

37. We realize that these considerations -- which are not new ones and which I have not attempted to elaborate in detail -- have not by themselves seemed entirely satisfactory to some of the participants in this Committee, participants who genuinely desire to take the largest possible step to curb any actual or potential arms race. It is precisely for this reason that we have incorporated in our treaty a specific provision for treaty review -- article V.

38. We have been asked specifically whether it is intended that the review conference might consider more than additional procedures for verification, a possibility that is referred to expressly in our article III. Our answer is that the review conference indeed may consider whether it is mutually desirable to establish additional substantive prohibitions, or, for that matter, whether to enlarge upon any other feature of the treaty.

39. We have specified that the review conference should take place five years from the entry into force of the treaty. We trust that note has been taken that this would be a firm commitment to hold the review conference at the end of a designated period. There would not be a question of majority or two-thirds votes or other procedural uncertainties about holding this first conference.

40. After the treaty has been in operation for some time, the parties will naturally have views as to whether a measure banning emplacement of weapons of mass destruction is adequate in contributing to a peaceful régime on the ocean floor and to the security of all nations. The parties will certainly be aware of whether new

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

developments in the fields of ocean and military technology have led to prospects, not now foreseen, for destabilizing arms competitions involving the sea-bed. Any proposals which participants in the review conference believed to be constructive could, and undoubtedly would, be put forward for negotiation.

41. The fact that the review conference would be set for five years after entry into force does not, however, mean that there could be no consideration of further prohibitions until that time. Undoubtedly parties that believed additional obligations were warranted would begin diplomatic soundings well before the review conference. Moreover, if a strong need were felt for a substantial amendment, for example two or three years after entry into force, then an amendment could be proposed pursuant to article IV, and appropriate diplomatic activity would ensue.

42. It is our belief, however, that five years after entry into force is a reasonable time for holding a review conference. The technology relating to the oceans is in the process of development. It is within a period of roughly five years that we may witness the sort of changes and advances that may permit us to see more clearly whether and how we ought to move towards prohibitions on a broader range of activities.

43. We sometimes concede for convenience that the United States proposal can be described as a "limited" one in that it focuses on prohibiting emplacement of weapons of mass destruction. The word "limited" may, however, convey a negative impression that is not justified. The United States proposal, if adopted, would be an important step in arms control relating to the oceans. It would be a treaty which, in addition to achieving a significant measure of nuclear arms control, would ensure through the review provision that all possible aspects of sea-bed arms control -- nuclear and conventional -- were subject to periodic scrutiny and negotiation when that was appropriate. And the treaty would provide a treaty framework, already in being for whatever additional measures the parties might judge desirable.

44. I should like to turn now to a second thread which has run through our informal talks. What is the significance of the United States proposal for countries which now have no capability or intention of emplacing nuclear weapons on the sea-bed? How can those countries participate in making the United States measure an effective international instrument? Let me respond to the question of participation first.

45. The question of participation relates, of course, to verification. Under the United States proposal, verification would be based on observation and consultation.

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

Earlier, in presenting the treaty to this Committee in May, we described why we believe this is a simple and appropriate approach in the light of the character of the prohibition we propose (ENDC/PV.414, paras. 12 et seq.), so I shall not repeat those particular considerations now.

46. Regarding the extent of participation by parties generally, however, it should be recognized that some types of observation can be carried out by almost all coastal States. The emplacement on the sea-bed of nuclear-weapon systems would in practice entail a good deal of surface activity. That activity would generally not be difficult to spot: in fact it would be almost impossible to carry it out clandestinely. There are few coastal States that do not have airplanes or ships able to keep watch over the waters in their vicinity. There would be few parties to a sea-bed treaty that would be unable, should they desire, to arrange for divers, even commercial divers whose services are available internationally, to investigate any suspicious situation in areas of the continental shelf adjacent to their territories. The procedures we have suggested, based on existing international rights, are therefore not only of practical significance for those countries that are most advanced in marine technology. Those procedures are meaningful for virtually all coastal States.

47. It is true that verification on the sea-bed is and will remain difficult in the deep ocean environment. There even the countries that have worked hardest to develop a capability will be severely limited and will have to be willing to undertake heavy expenses to perform any major under-water searches. In fact, a deep ocean search can be contemplated only under rather restricted conditions; that is, for a fairly large object whose location is known rather precisely.

48. Having in mind that most parties are not likely to be able to conduct deep sea-bed verification on their own, several delegations have asked us whether we think new international arrangements would be a good idea. We think that suggestions for such arrangements imply a greater capability to perform deep ocean searches than the facts at present justify. We are still learning the basic features of the deep ocean environment. Despite substantial efforts, our capabilities are still rudimentary. In this threshold stage it seems to us unwise to attempt to establish formal new international arrangements. In particular, we do not see how an international organization could now be established, staffed and equipped to perform tasks concerning which we have so little experience.

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

49. Similar considerations lead us to believe that it is not desirable at this time to spell out explicit provisions -- that is to say, commitments -- for providing third-party assistance. As the treaty enters into force and the parties gain experience in its operation we can reasonably foresee that States with mutual interests in particular areas of the sea-bed will work out consultations or other arrangements with one another. As a practical matter, we cannot imagine a situation in which a party with reasonable grounds for suspecting a violation of the treaty could not elicit the co-operation of other parties whose security interests would be served by the continued effectiveness of the treaty. We think that international co-operation of that nature would be more effective than procedures legislated in advance of the facts. Then, if such arrangements proved useful and it appeared desirable to have some sort of prescribed international framework, the review conference could consider ways to define and establish more specific procedures.

50. In contrast, an effort to formulate now a treaty obligation for third-party assistance would inevitably increase the complexity of our negotiations. A formal requirement to assist any complaining State could not be accepted without examining the possible need for criteria in the treaty to establish that a prima facie case had been presented that would justify the effort and expense, and perhaps even the hazards, of a verification operation.

51. Moreover, a formal obligation to assist would have to be accompanied by some provisions or understandings governing priorities as between different verification needs. That would not be a remote or hypothetical problem. The equipment capable of carrying out some types of verification is in extremely short supply in the entire world. It is conceivable that several equally plausible verification requests could occur at the same time. In addition, assistance might perhaps be sought more often from one qualified party than from another. At what point in such a situation would the requested party be justified in turning down a request? To what extent would a country capable of assistance be justified in withholding its equipment on a stand-by basis to serve its own legitimate purposes, such as research, salvage or rescue? Obviously, again, those could be complicated matters, which we think it would be well to avoid at this time.

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

52. As my final point let me discuss the significance which the United States proposed treaty would have for countries other than the nuclear-weapon Powers. As a practical matter, the prohibition in the United States treaty would, of course, primarily restrict the nuclear weapon States. This was pointed out most eloquently by the representative of Japan, Ambassador Asakai, in his statement of 17 July. We are also indebted to Ambassador Asakai for calling attention to the relationship of our proposal to other measures. Ambassador Asakai said:

"We are all aware how difficult it is to check the arms race once it gets started. Indeed, the successful conclusion of the Antarctic Treaty and of the outer-space Treaty (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI) (Annex)) was due to a large extent to the preventive nature of the provisions in those Treaties, which were introduced before the arms race in those areas actually started. It is for that reason that we are convinced that measures should be taken immediately to prohibit nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor before it is too late. We believe that such measures, if taken now, would not affect the balance of power in the deterrents of the super-Powers. Moreover, such a course of action would be in line with article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty, which states:

'Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date ...'." (ENDC/PV.420, para.11)

We in the United States delegation fully agree with that view, and hope that others will share the sense of urgency which was expressed by Ambassador Asakai.

53. There may, however, be some who are inclined to question the need for prompt action, or who may believe that the threat is only hypothetical. Such a conclusion, in our view, would not be prudent. Technology may develop with astonishing speed. The positions of governments may change unexpectedly. Military and technical possibilities which now may seem remote could rather abruptly become imminent and accordingly much more difficult to control. We should not miss an opportunity that exists now. And this need not happen.

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

54. Let me summarize the United States approach. What we propose is feasible now. Our proposal is simple, clear, and unambiguous, and the possibility of additional elements can be considered at a later date with the advantage of more experience.

55. Time and again it has been acknowledged that the nuclear arms race must be curbed and that all States have an interest in this problem by virtue of the vulnerability of every State to the ravages of nuclear war. The measure which the United States proposes regarding the sea-beds would close off emplacement of nuclear weapons in more than 100 million square miles of the earth's surface. It would be a worth-while step in the control of nuclear armaments. It would be a measure in the interests of all States.

56. Before concluding my statement today I should like to say a few brief words on another subject: the recent initiative of the United Kingdom in submitting to this Committee a draft treaty concerning the control of biological weapons (ENDC/255). It is plain to us, from having heard the most interesting presentation of Mr. Mulley (ENDC/PV.418) and from having begun our study of the British draft, that the United Kingdom's proposal is indeed a serious one, reflecting hard work and a genuine desire to contribute to the efforts of this Committee. The United States Government has under intensive study this summer the full range of policy issues relating to chemical and biological weapons, including those raised by the United Kingdom draft; and at this point we must reserve our position on them. We nevertheless welcome and will take full account of initiatives, such as that of the United Kingdom, which are put forward on the basis of serious research in an effort to find areas which, by mutual consent, can be excluded from the arms race.

57. There has, of course, already been considerable informal discussion regarding the United Kingdom proposal. We understand that some delegations are concerned whether it would be a sound procedure to consider the problem of biological weapons separately from that of chemical weapons. We also have thought about this question. We are not clear in our own minds whether it would be desirable to conclude a separate measure relating only to biological weapons. But we certainly must be prepared to study seriously any proposal that may offer promise or that may help us in understanding the various issues involved. The proposal of the United Kingdom delegation will stimulate discussion of many important questions of arms control -- questions of verification, questions of assurances, and the like.

(Mr. Leonard, United States)

58. Before we determine whether or not any proposal is a sound and a practical one, we should consider all of its political and technical aspects on their merits. In particular, it appears to us that the United Kingdom delegation has made a valid point in noting that biological weapons have never been used and that their characteristics and effects are different from those of chemical weapons. The experts' report prepared under the supervision of the Secretary-General (A/7575) has provided us with a detailed discussion of these differences. There is thus, at the least, a prima facie case for separate consideration of biological weapons.

59. President Nixon has instructed the United States delegation to join with other delegations in examining carefully any possibilities for reliable arms control in this field (ENDC/253). Accordingly we would suggest that, if the United Kingdom proposal is broadly supported in principle, a working group be created to discuss technical and other aspects. In any event, we hope that all delegations in this Committee will participate in serious discussion of the issues involved in the United Kingdom proposal.

60. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): Before proceeding to the statement which the Soviet delegation intends to make today on the substance of the questions under consideration in the Committee, we should like to associate ourselves with the congratulations addressed by you, Mr. Chairman, and also by the representative of the Polish People's Republic, to the United States delegation in connexion with the successful landing of the American astronauts on the moon.

61. The landing of the first men on the moon is an outstanding event in the history of all mankind, opening a new important page in the further conquest of outer space and the exploration of other celestial bodies of the solar system. The flight to the moon of the American astronauts Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins, whose names are familiar to the whole world today, is a brilliant example of courage and a supreme achievement of the human mind. We hope from the bottom of our hearts that the crew of Apollo 11 will successfully complete their courageous flight and return safely to the earth.

62. Turning to questions of substance, we should like to observe that the Soviet delegation intends to put forward in its statement today some considerations on the question of prohibiting chemical and bacteriological weapons. First of all, we should like to emphasize that the recently-received report of the Secretary-General of the

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

United Nations, U Thant, on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use (A/7575), which was prepared on the recommendation of our Committee and in pursuance of a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly (2454 A (XXIII); ENDC/237) will undoubtedly be conducive to fruitful discussion of this question. The Soviet delegation regards this report, prepared by a group of qualified consultant experts, as an important document likely to facilitate solution of the problem of the complete prohibition of chemical and bacteriological means of warfare.

63. We are carefully studying the report, and we believe that its scientifically-sound evaluations of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and of the effects of their possible use, as well as its conclusions, should act as a stimulus to the intensification of efforts aimed at reliably protecting mankind from the dangers inherent in a war involving the use of means of mass destruction such as chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. Availing itself of this opportunity, the Soviet delegation would like to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the experts who compiled the report and to the members of the United Nations Secretariat for the great and useful work which they have done.

64. The Soviet Union has always steadfastly urged that the peoples should be saved from the threat of chemical and bacteriological warfare and that everything should be done to solve the problem of the complete and effective prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons. It was precisely with these aims in view that this question was raised as one of the most important tasks in the Memorandum of the Soviet Government of 1 July 1968 on some urgent measures for stopping the arms race and for disarmament (ENDC/227). That Memorandum contains an urgent appeal to all States to consider once again ways and means of securing the observance by all countries of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 for the prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons (A/7575, p. 117).

65. We note with satisfaction that during the discussion of this important question both in the Committee on Disarmament and in the General Assembly of the United Nations the delegation of many countries expressed themselves in favour of taking steps as soon as possible to exclude chemical and bacteriological means of warfare completely and for ever from the life of mankind. We listened with great interest to the statement made

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

today by the representative of Poland on the subject of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and we must quite definitely emphasize that the conclusions and positions which have been expounded today in the statement of the representative of Poland meet with our full support.

66. The report presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in describing chemical and bacteriological means of warfare as weapons of mass destruction, notes that these weapons stand out in a class of their own among all armaments, since they are the only ones which exercise their effects solely on living, organic matter (ibid., para. 371). The particular danger of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons consists in the fact that their large-scale effects could lead to disastrous and irreversible consequences for the balance of nature. The report of the Secretary-General states:

> "The momentum of the arms race would clearly decrease if the production of these weapons were effectively and unconditionally banned. Their use, which could cause an enormous loss of human life, has already been condemned and prohibited by international agreements, in particular the Geneva Protocol of 1925, and, more recently, in resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The prospects for general and complete disarmament under effective international control, and hence for peace throughout the world, would brighten significantly if the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents intended for purposes of war were to end and if they were eliminated from all military arsenals." (ibid., para. 376)

67. Thus, if we wish to save mankind from chemical and biological means of warfare, it is necessary to prohibit them completely and for ever. To that end there is a good basis from which we should proceed -- the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which has stood the test of time and was a serious deterrent to the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons in the Second World War. Since the Second World War a further number of States have acceded to the Geneva Protocol, and its international importance has been reinforced by United Nations General Assembly resolutions 2162 B (XXI) of 5 December 1966 (ENDC/185) and 2454 A (XXIII) of 20 December 1968 (ENDC/237), which called for "strict observance by all States of the principles and objectives" of the Geneva Protocol and invited all States to accede to it.

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

68. It is pointed out in the report of the Secretary-General that the Geneva Protocol established

> "... a custom and hence a standard of international law, and in practice most States have adhered to the principle that no one should resort to the use of such weapons." (A/7575, para. 7)

In advocating the complete prohibition of chemical and biological weapons, the Soviet Union considers that accession to the Geneva Protocol by all States which have not yet become parties to it is a matter of importance and urgency. The Secretary-General also found it necessary in his Foreword to the report to "renew the appeal to all States to accede to the Geneva Protocol of 1925." (ibid., p. xii)

69. The discussion which has developed in the Committee shows that the members of the Committee agree in holding the opinion that the question of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons has a top priority. We have heard a number of interesting and informative statements on this problem. Some delegations have submitted specific documents to the Committee. At today's meeting the delegation of the People's Republic of Poland submitted a document (ENDC/256) which in our opinion deserves the closest attention and consideration.

70. At one of the previous meetings the United Kingdom delegation tabled a draft convention on the prohibition of biological methods of warfare (ENDC/255), which is being thoroughly studied by the Soviet delegation. Reserving the right to comment on the proposals submitted by the United Kingdom delegation in greater detail later, we should like today to set forth some considerations of a general nature.

71. The United Kingdom proposal puts forward the principle of treating the prohibition of chemical weapons and that of biological weapons separately. The United Kingdom representative, Mr. Mulley, said as far back as last year (ENDC/PV.381, para. 91) that it was necessary to start settling the question of the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons by concluding a separate agreement relating only to the prohibition of biological weapons. Speaking at the Committee's meeting on 10 July this year, he confirmed that position by stating that

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

"... if we try to tackle biological and chemical methods of warfare simultaneously, far from making progress on both fronts we shall not make the rapid progress we want and, I am sure, the whole world wants." (ENDC/PV.418, para.13)

In this connexion Mr. Mulley emphasized that -

"... since chemical weapons pose a more difficult problem than biological weapons, ... the right course is to make a start by banning not merely the use but the actual production and possession of biological weapons" (ibid.)

72. The question arises whether the approach suggested by the United Kingdom side will be a correct one. It is no accident that for many decades chemical and biological means of warfare have been treated together, and the prohibition of the use of these types of weapons represents a single, generally-recognized rule of international law. The problems of chemical and bacteriological weapons are treated jointly not only in the Geneva Protocol of 1925 itself, but also in a number of important resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, including those resolutions to which I have already had the honour to refer, namely 2162 B (XXI) and 2454 A (XXIII).

73. A number of objective factors substantiate this joint approach to the problem of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

74. First of all, both these types of weapons are means of mass destruction of human beings and are solely designed, as the report by the experts indicates, to strike down the forces of belligerents and the civilian population and to destroy organic matter. Neither chemical nor biological means of warfare damage industrial or military installations, structures, etc. Incidentally, that is the difference between those means of warfare and the other type of weapons of mass destruction -- nuclear weapons.

75. That the problems relating to chemical and biological weapons should be treated and settled together is also confirmed by the fact that in a number of cases it is extremely difficult, and in some quite impossible, to draw a distinction between particular agents. In this respect the report of the United Nations Secretary-General says:

"All biological processes depend upon chemical or physico-chemical reactions, and what may be regarded today as a biological agent could, tomorrow, as knowledge advances, be treated as chemical." (A/7575, para.19).

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

76. It is common knowledge that the means of delivery of both chemical and bacteriological agents are practically the same. This is also pointed out in the report of the United Nations Secretary-General:

"Bacteriological (biological) agents can, in principle, be loaded into the same type of munitions as can chemical agents." (ibid., para.71)

It is also known that in the armed forces of many countries the same services deal with questions relating to chemical and to biological means of warfare and protection from them.

77. No doubt members of the Committee will recall that when, at the suggestion of Poland (ENDC/PV.385*, para.70), the question of preparing a report on the effects of the possible use of chemical and bacteriological weapons was being discussed last year, an attempt was made to separate one question from the other and conduct research only on one of those means of warfare (ENDC/PV.387, paras. 9 et seq.). However, that proposal had no success and was rejected, and the Committee unanimously approved the decision to ask the United Nations General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the effects of the possible use of both chemical and biological means of warfare (ENDC/236, p.4). This proposal was later adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 2454 A (XXIII)).

78. The attempt to divide the problem into two parts and to deal at the present time only with biological means of warfare would result in the problem of the complete prohibition of chemical weapons being virtually postponed indefinitely. The question arises whether the prohibition of biological weapons alone would not lead to intensifying the chemical arms race. This question stems from the fear lest there should come about a situation fraught with serious consequences. It cannot be denied that the danger of chemical weapons being used is, precisely in present-day circumstances, more real. These weapons have been used on many occasions and on a fairly large scale. The report cites figures giving the number of casualties resulting from the use of chemical weapons among the belligerents during the First World War. Even the chemical arms race itself in these days results in victims, in the poisoning of human beings and animals. The danger inherent in the production and stockpiling of such weapons has been given wide publicity at the present time, even in the last few days, and has aroused justifiable concern in public opinion in various countries of the world. In regard to the use of biological means of warfare, the Secretary-General's report indicates that "There is no military experience of the use of bacteriological (biological) agents as weapons of war ..." (A/7575, para.38).

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

79. In comparing chemical and bacteriological weapons we have no intention at all of underestimating the importance of the problem of prohibiting biological weapons; but we should like to emphasize in the clearest possible manner that the prohibition of biological weapons alone, without the simultaneous prohibition of chemical means of warfare, would be wrong, because the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons would in fact remain outside the prohibition.

80. At present a number of countries are conducting, and ever intensifying, research work with a view to creating chemical substances many times more lethal than those used in the past. The Secretary-General's report stated that -

"The particular threat posed by chemical weapons today derives from the existence of new, and far more toxic, chemical compounds than were known fifty years ago." (ibid., para.15)

81. It has been asserted here that it is necessary at present to deal with biological weapons alone because, allegedly, the prohibition of the production and stockpiling of chemical means of warfare is a difficult matter. However, no well-founded arguments have been put forward in support of this assertion. The question arises, why is it more difficult to prohibit chemical weapons than biological weapons? In our opinion there are at the present time equal possibilities for the simultaneous prohibition of chemical and biological weapons, provided there is the goodwill and the desire to do so on the part of States.

82. That approach is also shared by the authors of the Secretary-General's report and by many members of the Committee. Thus, the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, speaking on 20 August 1968 against the separate treatment of chemical and biological weapons, emphasized that all existing types of chemical and bacteriological weapons should be included in one category. Allow me to quote from her statement:

"The Swedish delegation wants to state that to our mind the weightier arguments speak in favour of an attempt not to separate the treatment of B weapons from that of C weapons." (ENDC/PV.391, para.24)

Today we have also heard the point of view expressed on this question by the Polish representative, who convincingly showed in his statement that questions relating to the production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons should be dealt with together.

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

83. The Soviet delegation supports the recommendation of the United Nations Secretary-General that all countries should

> "... reach agreement to halt the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents for purposes of war and to achieve their effective elimination from the arsenal of weapons."
> (A/7575, p.xii)

84. We should like also to emphasize that the division of the question of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons into two parts would lead to the weakening and undermining of the Geneva Protocol, in which both of those questions are dealt with simultaneously. Apparently it is no coincidence that the United Kingdom draft convention proposes the undertaking anew of the obligation not to use biological weapons, as though no such prohibition existed, although, as we know, it is quite definitely laid down in the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

85. We should like once more to emphasize most strongly that our task is not only to prevent the weakening of the Geneva Protocol but also, and on the contrary, to seek to strengthen it through its strict observance and the accession to it of all States.

86. The position of the Soviet Union on the question of chemical and biological weapons is clear and definite. The Soviet Union is in favour of the effective prohibition of chemical and biological means of warfare. At the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on 10 July this year the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. A.A. Gromyko, expressed the hope that-

> "... this question will be settled by States with all the requisite responsibility, and that in the not too distant future an appropriate agreement, confirmed in accordance with international legal procedure, will be achieved."

The Soviet delegation in the Committee is prepared, for its part, to do everything possible to achieve that important, noble and humane goal.

87. Mr. KHALLAF (United Arab Republic): My delegation joins you, Mr. Chairman, and the representatives of Poland and the Soviet Union in extending warmest congratulations to the United States people and to the United States delegation here on the occasion of the successful landing of the men of Apollo 11 on the moon. We have

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

all beer following them with admiration, wishing them a safe return and hoping that their achievement will help in furthering the cause of peace and the spirit of brotherhood among men.

88. My delegation followed with attention the statements made today. Needless to say, we shall study them with the utmost care and comment on them in due time.

89. At the outset of my statement today I should like, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Republic, to extend to the delegations of Japan and the Mongolian People's Republic a most cordial welcome on their joining the Eighteen-Nation Committee in Geneva. We see in the choice of those two nations for participation in our work a clear recognition of the useful role they are called upon to assume in the achievement of our common task; and we are looking forward with expectation to their contributions thereto, which, we do not doubt, will be both valuable and constructive. In that connexion I should like to assure the delegations of Japan and the Mongolian People's Republic of our sincere wish for the closest co-operation in the fulfilment of our joint endeavours.

90. I should like, furthermore, to express the hope of my delegation that any further enlargement of the Eighteen-Nation Committee will be contemplated on the basis of maintaining the negotiating character of the Committee as well as the geographic and political balance, which have proved so fruitful to our work here in the past, and that the established right of the General Assembly to manifest its views on the question of the expansion of membership will be upheld.

91. Before proceeding further in my statement, I should like also to address a warm welcome to the representative of the United States of America and one of our co-Chairmen, Ambassador Leonard, and to wish him every success in his mission.

92. Since the time available to this Committee before preparing its report to the General Assembly is rather limited, it would seem best to use that time in a rational manner by concentrating our efforts on certain particular items amongst which is the prevention of an arms race on the sea-bed. During our spring session this year, draft treaties pertaining to this important subject were tabled by the Soviet Union (ENDC/240) and the United States of America (ENDC/249) respectively. Many delegations -- amongst them that of the United Arab Republic (ENDC/PV.403, paras. 32 et seq.) -- have

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

already commented on the Soviet draft. We now feel that we should take our thoughts a step forward, if only in a provisional manner.

93. While we do not see the need to reiterate the great importance of the item, we nevertheless deem it useful to try to delimit the nature of this particular problem. The sea-bed treaty is generally considered to be only a preventive measure and not a curative one. As such it will join other similar treaties that have been successfully negotiated before.

94. With this in mind we must moreover remember that this treaty will not transform the seas and oceans into a peaceful area, since it is meant to deal only with prohibiting the use of the sea-bed for military purposes. It is not intended to cover military activities on the surface of the sea, or in the even vaster region between the surface and the ocean floor. Thus these two areas will remain infested with highly-sophisticated weapons, both nuclear and conventional. This grave limitation is a cause for regret, and if we wish, in spite of this apparent shortcoming, to bring our negotiations on this item to an early and fruitful end, it will be due to our belief in the utility of proceeding by many gradual steps towards general and complete disarmament. In this connexion one is tempted to link the sea-bed treaty to the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*), especially if we consider the endeavours of the nuclear-weapon States to bring about the former as an application of article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty.

95. Concerning the scope of military activities to be prohibited, the two drafts before the Committee present us with two different proposals. The Soviet draft calls for complete demilitarization, including conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, whereas the United States draft refers to the latter type only. We have carefully studied the reasons and weighty arguments presented by their respective sponsors. We have, as well, taken note of the deliberations so far in this Committee, where a variety of other proposals have been thoughtfully presented. These have ranged from a general prohibition subject to a few exceptions, to one comprising weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons to be agreed upon in a list to a prohibition of weapons of mass destruction in a first stage to be followed by a ban on conventional weapons at a later stage.

96. The delegation of the United Arab Republic has already stated its basic position on the problem, which is "to prohibit all military weapons and military activity on the sea-bed" (ENDC/PV.403, para.34), and the reasons for such a position are manifold.

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

97. To begin with, the limitation of the prevention of an arms race on the sea-bed to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction only, while leaving the question of conventional military uses in abeyance, cannot be looked upon with equanimity, as it would pose with time an inevitable and ever-increasing threat which does not respond to the world-wide desire that the sea-bed be reserved exclusively for peaceful purposes 98. Furthermore, it would seem to us that the problem of verification might not prove so difficult as appeared at the beginning; for we would think that conventional military activity will practically be confined, at least for some years to come, to only a very limited part of the vast sea-bed and ocean floor and will not cover it all. Our reasoning is that nature itself imposes these limitations; for there are certain depths beyond which man is not yet prepared to venture. If to that we add further limitations imposed by the geographical location and strategic considerations -- after all, such installations will be put in chosen sites only -- the part of the sea-bed open to military activity would perhaps have shrunk to such an extent as to render the issue of verification much easier of approach.

99. Moreover, could not verification be carried out primarily, but not exclusively, at the very surface of the sea, at least in the early stages of a treaty? It appears to us that the most likely way to a given spot on the sea-bed is via the surface of the sea directly above it, and that the agglomeration of ships with their particular contours, cranes and gear in a sensitive area of the high seas for days, if not weeks or months, could hardly escape our vigilance.

100. Lastly, to postpone the issue of preventing a conventional arms race on the sea-bed could only clear the way for the ultimate perfecting and proliferation of these arms to such an extent as to render later agreement with a view to their limitation a most difficult if not altogether impossible task. In this connexion I need hardly point to the example of the comprehensive test-ban treaty, which, so many years after the limited Moscow Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1), still eludes agreement.

101. Let me assure the Committee that it is not my intention to minimize the many and varied difficulties to be encountered in this respect. Quite on the contrary, I merely wish us to serve peace well, and to do so we must look at the problem from all its different aspects.

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

102. Having said that, we strongly believe it advisable, in case no agreement on the scope as envisaged by us emerges from our deliberations here, that the principle of general prohibition be clearly enunciated in the sea-bed treaty, which would then be susceptible to some exceptions. This is an idea first suggested by Mrs. Myrdal, the representative of Sweden, during our meeting on 22 April (ENDC/PV.405, paras.72, 77). Of course, we understand these exceptions to be based on certain criteria to be agreed upon by all.

103. When comparing further the Soviet and United States drafts on the question of the scope of prohibition, one can see that the difference goes well beyond the type of weapons to be banned from the sea-bed. Thus, while the Soviet draft, in the first paragraph of article 1, establishes the principle of prohibition and follows it in the second paragraph by the specifics of that principle, the United States draft does not refer to a principle but tackles the specifics only. For reasons already mentioned, the delegation of the United Arab Republic is in favour of the first approach.

104. Moreover, the wording of the Soviet draft does not mention clearly who it is that is to implement the prohibition; while the United States draft refers clearly to "Each State Party to this Treaty". Here we should prefer the latter wording.

105. Furthermore, the United States draft, unlike the Soviet draft, sets forth in paragraph 2 of article I the various forms of prohibition when it states: "to refrain from causing, encouraging, facilitating or in any way participating in the activities prohibited by this Article." That precise and comprehensive formulation is acceptable to us.

106. Lastly, both drafts comprise many terms in the first article as well as in some other articles which need to be clarified without undue rigidity. My delegation deems this point to be of particular importance if we are to understand clearly our future obligations and rights under the provisions of the treaty.

107. I should like now to make a few comments on the area to be covered by the prohibition. The delegation of the United Arab Republic has noticed with satisfaction that both the Soviet and the United States drafts agree that the delimitation of the area to be covered by the prohibition would serve the purpose of this treaty only and would in no way prejudice the position of any State concerning the width of territorial waters or any other controversial point related to the law of the seas. This convergence of views has been supported by a clear consensus in the Committee, and we consider this to be a positive and realistic approach which would greatly facilitate our task.

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

108. Another point of consensus in the Committee is related to the common desire that as large an area as possible should be covered by the prohibition. In the course of our discussions during the spring session some delegations pointed to the inter-relationship between the scope of the prohibition and the area of the prohibition. We think that this relationship exists. But we believe, moreover, that there exists another relationship too -- namely, that between the security requirements of the coastal States and the military uses of the high seas. In our opinion the unrestricted deployment of mobile naval power by some States makes it more necessary for other coastal States, particularly the less powerful, to rely on their national potential for defence in the maritime zone contiguous to their sea shores. Thus the retention of a part of the sea-bed for defence requirements would continue to be logical and appropriate until measures for general and complete disarmament were adequately agreed upon with regard to the military uses of the high seas.

109. The delegation of the United Arab Republic considers the twelve-mile limit proposed for this zone in the Soviet draft to be a reasonable one. This is a limit which coincides with the width of the territorial waters of many small countries, including my own. But we certainly believe too that, for the purpose of a treaty on arms prevention on the sea-bed, countries whose territorial waters are less than twelve miles wide should enjoy the same rights as those whose territorial waters are of that width. During the meeting on 8 May Ambassador Roshchin, the representative of the USSR, stated:

> "The Soviet proposal for the establishment of a twelve-mile maritime zone is based on the premise that such a zone is to be established for all coastal States irrespective of the width of their territorial waters. Consequently, also those States whose territorial waters are under twelve miles would be protected by the twelve-mile zone established for the purposes of this treaty".
>
> (ENDC/PV.409, para.35)

110. It is also the belief of my delegation that the establishment of such a maritime zone is totally divorced from questions of sovereignty in the territorial waters or sovereign rights in the continental shelves. These rights, established under international law and international agreement, thus remain unaffected.

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

111. My delegation listened with the utmost attention to the statement made by Ambassador Asakai, the representative of Japan, at the last meeting of our Committee. He suggested (ENDC/PV.420, paras.14, 15) that the area of prohibition, which in his opinion should be in terms of denuclearization, should extend to the sea-bed and the continental shelf of the territorial waters. Thus the entire sea-bed and ocean floor would be free from nuclear weapons of mass destruction. Conceivably the prohibition would not interfere with conventional weapons in the territorial waters of coastal States. This imaginative suggestion is being studied most attentively by my delegation.

112. I can only point at this stage to the various implications of this suggestion in relation to nuclear disarmament measures by nuclear Powers and to its link with the non-proliferation régime contemplated by the non-proliferation Treaty. In our opinion we still have to listen to more comments, especially from the Japanese delegation itself as well as from nuclear Powers. One aspect of the question would be -- as the representative of Japan himself pointed out -- the enormous problems with regard to the establishment of a workable system of inspection and control. This problem could acquire a more serious character since the implications of the Japanese suggestion might conflict not only with the security needs of a country but also with sovereignty considerations in its territorial waters.

113. I now wish to tackle the question of verification. In attempting to formulate treaty provisions in this field we must be guided by the very nature of the sea-bed environment. We would agree with the view expressed by some delegations that all-out analogy with outer space or Antarctica should have its limits. The sea-bed and ocean floor are inseparable parts of the world oceans and seas, on the coasts of which most countries are situated, and they are used by these in one form or another and in various degrees. Most members of the international community are, by virtue of this fact, maritime countries. Few countries are Antarctic Powers and even fewer are space Powers.

114. A system of verification and inspection, in order to be both workable and attractive, should therefore take into due consideration the manifold interests of the large part of the community of nations. In this light it becomes of the utmost importance that such a system should be tailored in such a way as to afford every country, even a small country, an opportunity to put it into operation whenever it deems it necessary. The right to inspect should therefore acquire, as far as possible, practical value for all. Without that a non-armament agreement on the sea-bed would fall short of enlisting the wide adherence which is an essential factor if it is to be meaningful.

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

115. Consequently we do not believe that small countries would be sufficiently persuaded to adhere to an agreement whose system of verification was based only on the right of every State to observe the activities of others on the sea-bed; for that right is already in existence under present international law applicable to the high seas. Indeed, article III of the United States draft recognizes that fact when it states that "the Parties ... remain free to observe activities of other States ...". Furthermore, the exercise of such a right would have a meaningful and practical value for a small country only if it is afforded assistance by some other country or through some international arrangements.

116. A system based primarily on observation is not ameliorated by providing for an undertaking on the part of the suspected State to consult and co-operate to resolve the question; for consultation and co-operation are by definition dependent on the will of the suspected State, and they constitute a stage subsequent to the stage of observation, on which I have already expressed my delegation's misgivings.

117. We also find some difficulty in understanding the reasons for making the revision of the verification system envisaged by the United States draft more rigid than revision of other provisions of the treaty, some of which are very fundamental indeed. For, while all other provisions could be amended at any time in accordance with article IV, the revision of the system of verification is to be carried out exceptionally through the procedure of a review conference to be held five years after the entry into force of the treaty.

118. Furthermore, we find some ambiguity with regard to the provisions on consultation and co-operation in the United States draft. We assume, however, that these consultations are supposed to take place between the suspecting party and the party which is suspected to have emplaced the prohibited weapons. But what would be the situation if the latter refused to co-operate in these consultations? Another question: is it conceived under the United States draft that certain measures are to be taken in the territorial waters of a State when alleged suspicions are related to the sea-bed under those territorial waters of those waters are covered by the prohibition; and would those measures be taken after the permission of the coastal State had been acquired, or irrespective of that permission? I think it would be useful to hear some clarification on these and other related questions.

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

119. We have also studied with great attention the system of verification proposed in article II of the Soviet draft, and listened to the various comments made on that article in the course of the spring session. We believe that the principle of accessibility to the installations and structures goes a step further in making the system more effective. Our main difficulty, however, with the proposed Soviet system lies in the fact that it does not afford a practical opportunity for medium and small Powers to exercise their rights of verification and inspection.

120. Faced with those difficulties in both the Soviet and the American drafts, we find ourselves in no position but to insist on providing for certain provisions in any verification system which would make such a system non-discriminatory and workable for all. We have thought, together with others, that one method of achieving this could be by way of making verification through access available to any State party to the treaty, through its own means or with the full or partial assistance of any other State party to the treaty, if so requested. When it becomes feasible, such verification could also be carried out by an appropriate international agency or arrangement.

121. We believe that that is the minimum provision necessary to give meaning to the system of verification, at least for small and medium-zized States. Meanwhile we remain open-minded and ready to hear the comments of other delegations in our effort to secure a verification system that is equal in its practical application.

122. It is the objective of my delegation, while we are engaged in this rather comparative approach to the two texts before the Committee, to try to find more grounds for an agreement which would best secure man's benefit and betterment in this vast and promising human environment.

123. We would also support the ideas expressed at previous meetings by some delegations regarding the inclusion in the preamble to the treaty of certain passages from the United Nations resolutions on the question of the sea-bed. We refer in particular to General Assembly resolution 2340 (XXII), which expressed the mindfulness of the General Assembly of -

> "... the importance of preserving the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the sub-soil thereof ... from actions and uses which might be detrimental to the common interests of mankind",

(Mr. Khallaf, United Arab Republic)

and to General Assembly resolution 2467 A (XXIII), in which the Assembly expressed its conviction that exploitation of the sea-bed -

"... should be carried out for the benefit of mankind as a whole, irrespective of the geographical location of States, taking into account the special interests and needs of the developing countries".

124. My delegation would find a reference to some specific purposes of the Charter preferable to a general reference to the Charter, since what we propose to do, while it is in full conformity with the Charter, would go beyond the Charter in the limitations it would impose on freedom to use the sea-bed and the ocean floor for military purposes.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 421st plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Alhaji Sule Kolo, representative of Nigeria.

"Statements were made by the Chairman and by the representatives of Poland, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Arab Republic.

"The representative of Poland submitted a working paper concerning the report of the Secretary-General of 1 July 1969 on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use (A/7575) (ENDC/256).

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 24 July 1969, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.